

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph [28] with the following rewritten paragraph:

--[28] Internet 50 provides a mechanism allowing the various devices and computer systems depicted in Fig. 1 to communicate and exchange data and information with each other. Internet 50 may itself be comprised of many interconnected computer systems and communication links. While in one embodiment, participants communicate over the Internet, in other embodiments, communications between participants may occur over any suitable communication network including a local area network (LAN), a wide area network (WAN), a wireless network, an intranet, a private network, a public network, a switched network, an enterprise network, a virtual private network, and the like. Further, communications may occur over a combination of the various types of above mentioned networks.--Please replace the paragraph [29] with the following rewritten paragraph:

--[29] Links used to connect the various systems depicted in Fig. 1 to Internet 50 may be of various types including hardwire links, optical links, satellite or other wireless communications links, wave propagation links, or any other mechanisms for communication of information. Various communication protocols may be used to facilitate communication of information via the communication links. These communication protocols may include TCP/IP, HTTP protocols, extensible markup language (XML), synchronous optical network (SONET) protocols, synchronous digital hierarchy (SDH) protocols, wireless application protocol (WAP), protocols under development by industry standard organizations, vendor-specific protocols, customized protocols, and others.--

Please replace the paragraph [32] with the following rewritten paragraph:

--[32] As shown in Fig. 2, IP data processing system 100 includes a Web server 101, a database 106 and paper mailroom 108. System 100 also includes an access management system 109 that provides Case Data Unit security services as described in more detail below. Web server 101 includes a server engine 102 that generates and sends graphical documents including Web pages 104 to client systems as requested and an electronic mailroom 107. In a distributed system such as that depicted in Fig. 1, computer systems that request data or services are classified as client computer systems while computer systems that

provide the data or services requested by client computers are classified as server systems. Accordingly, the computer system(s) of IP data processing system 100 may be classified as server systems while computer systems of the participants may be classified as client systems. It should be apparent that a particular computer system may function both as a client system and a server system based upon whether the computer system is requesting data and/or services or receiving data and/or services. Thus, technology developers 110, patent law firms 120, service providers 130 and licensees 160 typically include one or more client systems. For example, a large corporation (technology developer) may have 150 inventors, four patent administrators and two in-house patent practitioners. Each of these individuals likely has their own computer system and can thus become a client system. Additionally, computers that are part of patent offices 140 can also be client systems in some embodiments of the invention as described below with respect to both Figs. 2 and 3.--

Please replace the paragraph [36] with the following rewritten paragraph:

--[36] It should be apparent that distributed system 100 depicted in Fig. 1 is merely illustrative of an embodiment incorporating the present invention and does not limit the scope of the invention recited in the claims. One of ordinary skill in the art would recognize other variations, modifications, and alternatives. For example, in alternative embodiments of the present invention, system 100 may be deployed in various other environments such as an enterprise environment, a stand alone system, and the like.--

Please replace the paragraph [37] with the following rewritten paragraph:

--[37] Electronic mailroom 107 is part of server 102 and includes a suite of programs that interface to the standards set by each patent office 140. For example, in order to file patent applications electronically through the USPTO the system comports to the standards required by the USPTO's Electronic Filing System (EFS). This includes using the Electronic Packaging and Validation Engine (ePAVE) or compatible software to facilitate electronic filing. Complete details of the ePAVE software are available online through the USPTO's Electronic Business Center Web site <http://pto-ebc.uspto.gov/>. Also, in order to track and update status information for pending patent applications, such as Examiner name, assigned art unit and class/subclass, etc., electronic mailroom 107 has the ability to interface to USPTO's Patent

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Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system using appropriate digital certificates.
Electronic mailroom 107 also includes other programs to interface with other patent offices.--

Please replace the paragraph [39] with the following rewritten paragraph:

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--[39] IP data processing system 100 also provides a conduit through which potential licensees 160 may purchase technology from technology developers 110. This conduit may include both general access to the public and subscription access. For example, an individual technology developer 110(~~x~~)(n) may decide to place selected ones of its IP assets available for license to any interested party. In this case, IP data management system lists the selected assets on appropriate Web pages generated by server engine 102 and allows public access to the assets to any client system browsing the pages. Other technology developers (e.g., prolific universities) may decide to enter arrangements with priority licensees such that these priority licensees pay a subscription fee to the university for "first look" rights at new IP assets. Under this arrangement, the priority licensees will be able to access appropriate data describing the IP assets (e.g., title, abstract, claims, inventor list) through Web pages that have restricted access rights and are thus not viewable to the general public (i.e., non-priority licensees).--

Please replace the paragraph [42] with the following rewritten paragraph:

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--[42] The workflow design is defined in the customer set-up process. In the set-up process, users are assigned roles that play a part in the workflow. Rules are established that dictate to whom documents are routed at each stage in the process, how often users should be reminded of a task, and what task is required next after each preceding task. IP data processing system 100 has a mechanism for notifying users of required tasks, and for users to notify the system that tasks are complete. The system makes available (for example, through html links to documents stored in database 106) to the appropriate users any documents necessary for performing the relevant task (e.g., a maintenance fee due date reminder task sent to an appropriate in-house practitioner at a technology developer 110(~~x~~)(n) may include an html link to the allowed patent so the practitioner can quickly review the patent's abstract and claims). In order to track and identify bottlenecks in the workflow process, the system automatically tracks the amount of total time elapsed since the beginning of the workflow, as well as the time elapsed during the performance of each task and the time elapsed between each task. The set-up process

can be rerun at a later date to allow flexibility for changing roles or tasks, eliminating tasks, changing document routing, or otherwise redefining the workflow for any document at any time by authorized users.--

Please replace the paragraph [44] with the following rewritten paragraph:

--[44] As an example, the home page that is presented to the client system for an inventor working at a particular technology developer 110(x)(n) is different from the home page that is presented to an in-house practitioner working at the same technology developer 110(x)(n). Similarly, both of these home pages are different from the home page presented to an outside practitioner working at patent law firm 120(y)(n) that works with and represents technology developer 110(x)(n).--

Please replace the paragraph [54] with the following rewritten paragraph:

--[54] Finally, access to Case Data Units can be granted or denied on an individual case level. For example, a Case Data Unit level access can be used to deny, for conflict purposes (e.g., an ethical wall), an individual client system access to a Case Data Unit sharing a common group assignment with the client system. Further details of the use of roles, permissions, groups and Case Data Units according to one embodiment of the invention are set forth in concurrently filed U.S. Provisional Application Number 60/333,962 60/ (Attorney Docket No. 020313-001710) entitled "DATA ACCESS CONTROL TECHNIQUES USING ROLES AND PERMISSIONS" and having Stephen K. Boyer, Jeffry J. Grainger and Cecily Anne Snyder as inventors. The 020313-001710 60/333,962 application is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.--

Please replace the paragraph [77] with the following rewritten paragraph:

--[77] Further details of how system 100 can implement such docketing rules are set forth in U.S. Application Number 09/996,341 09/ (Attorney Docket No. 020313-001810) entitled "DOCKETING SYSTEM" and having Cecily Anne Snyder as inventor. The 020313-001810 09/996,341 application is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.--

Please replace the paragraph [91] with the following rewritten paragraph:

AP [91] Web page 40f in Fig. 3F instructs the inventor to enter information related to the date the invention was first conceived (field 58) as well as information related to if and when it was reduced to practice (fields 60 and 62). While not shown, text 49 may include html links that further explain the importance of this information as well as further explain the concept of reduction to practice. Web page 40g (Fig. 3G) asks the inventor if he or she performed any sort of prior art search (field 64) and, if so, allows the inventor to enter dates related to the search (field 66) and upload the search results (~~field 68~~ (field 68) if they are stored as a computer file. Alternatively, the inventor could type in the results of the prior art search by selecting an appropriate option presented through text 49 but not shown in Fig. 3G.--

Please replace the paragraph [114] with the following rewritten paragraph:

AI [114] Further details on the payment of annuity and maintenance fees according to various embodiments of system 100 is presented in concurrently filed U.S. Application No. 09/997,203-09/_____, (Attorney Docket No. 020313-004100US), entitled "COMPUTER-IMPLEMENTED METHOD OF PAYING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ANNUITY AND MAINTENANCE FEES" listing Jeffry J. Grainger as inventor, which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.--

Please replace the paragraph [118] with the following rewritten paragraph:

AI [118] Additionally, system 100 includes software that facilitates the invoicing of and payment of practitioner fees. During the user set-up process, technology developers 110, patent law firms 120 and service providers 130 define how they intend to submit to each other and provide for payment of the same. System 100 then provides, through a Web page accessible from the appropriate client system's home page, a form for charges for services to be entered. For example, system 100 provides a Web page that allows practitioner 120(x)(n) to enter time, along with a description of tasks, spent on preparation of a patent application for technology developer 110(y)(n). System 100 knows the billing rate for practitioner 120(x)(n) and can therefore calculate a total invoice amount. During user set-up, practitioner 520(x)(n) and technology developer 110(y)(n) enter information about what sort of event triggers the sending of such invoices, e.g., on a monthly basis, upon completion of a document, upon filing a patent

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application, etc. When the event occurs, system 100 then generates an alert that is directed to the message/alert board of the appropriate client system (e.g., a patent administrator at technology developer 110(y)(n)). The client system can then view invoice and elect to pay or not pay it. Payment can be made by a transfer of funds from a financial institution associated with technology developer 110(x)(n) to a financial institution associated with patent law firm 120(x)(n). In some embodiments, system 100 charges a small percentage of the invoice amount for coordinating such payment.--

Please replace the paragraph [120] with the following rewritten paragraph:

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--[120] As described above, system ~~500~~ 100 is entrusted with highly sensitive intellectual property documents that often represent the "crown jewels" of technology developers 110. Accordingly, system 100 has extensive security measures to ensure such information remains confidential. In some embodiments these security measures include: verifying user identity (e.g., through a user ID and password logon process, RSA's proprietary Secure ID system, a biometric device that authenticates a user according to unique physical attributes such as retinal scans or fingerprints, or other techniques) for each client system that logs onto system 100, controlling user access to resources based on permission levels as already described, encrypting sensitive data in transit over private and/or public networks (e.g., using the SSL protocol for transmissions over the public Internet and/or using other known encryption techniques, such as virtual private network (VPN) tunneling techniques), encrypting sensitive data in database 106, detecting and responding to attacks in real time and providing complete audit information to track activity, providing an external firewall that verifies all user credentials before allowing any traffic to enter the extranet and blocking all undesired and/or unknown data packets from entering system 100 providing antivirus protection.--